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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 04 USNATO 000337

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SUBJECT: SEPTEMBER 15 2008 VCC AND EXPERTS MEETING

REF: A. A. AC/319-N(2008)0017-REV2
[1](#)B. B. STATE 97613

Classified By: A/DCM W. Scott Reid for reasons 1.4 (b and d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary. In the VCC, Experts agreed with the U.S. position that discussion papers should not be tabled in Vienna prior to the AIAM. Papers on Sensitive Points and Concrete Parameters for Specified Areas were dropped, but the Chair will introduce a new paper on the Definition of Defense Installations at the next experts meeting. Also, Experts will discuss Russia's proposal on defining the size of a specified area in lieu of the Allied draft. The remaining topics that do not have volunteer authors have been dropped from discussion for the AIAM.

[1](#)2. (S) In the VCC the Chair announced that Georgia indicated it would not be able to meet the deadlines for CFE data exchange in December. Georgia is accepting CFE inspections, but has requested Allies consider inspecting under Section VIII. Norway briefed its intent to inspect Russia's notified major military exercise in Totskoya under Vienna Document 99 (VD99) and that it will test Russia's 18,000 square kilometer limit for the size of a specified area. Canada and Spain reported on their Open Skies flight Rejection. The Chair asked Allies to consider discussing VD99 measures that could have been useful in addressing the crisis in Georgia. The IS reported that Russia has not accessed VERITY since December [1](#)2007. The next VCC and Experts Meetings are tentatively scheduled for October 28. End Summary.

Experts -- VD99 coordination trial for 2008

[1](#)3. (C) The Chair will issue a second revision of paper following interventions from Norway, Turkey, Belgium, Canada and Portugal. Paragraph two will require nations to submit bids to the IS in early October so the staff can issue a list of bids prior to the proposed annual coordination meeting in November. The first sentence of paragraph eight will be revised from "(, the Ally first scheduled(" to "(, the Ally last scheduled(." Paragraph nine will indicate that the Allies will revise the deconflicted schedule in the VCC.

Experts - Discussion Papers

[1](#)4. (C) The VCC Experts Meeting was focused on discussion of the revised staff papers annexed to Ref A. Per guidance in

Ref B, the U.S. (Meyer) noted that some of the papers are nearing agreement and that the U.S. would not support the introduction of mature topics in the FSC. Since the goal of preparing these staff papers is to stimulate discussion at the AIAM, he said that it might be time for the committee to consider the most effective way to achieve this objective. A number of delegations seemed to nod in agreement, while Slovenia intervened in support. The Chair (in den Bosch) noted that the committee was not under any time pressure, but agreed that the papers are intended for use at the AIAM and supported the U.S. point asking delegations to begin considering how they would present papers.

¶5. (C) Duration of an evaluation visit. Nations were nearly split in support of options for procedures for stopping the clock. However, Denmark, Norway and the United Kingdom opposed both options and questioned the need for the paper at all. Denmark's and Norway's opposition was based on the argument that evaluation visits are not intended to be counting exercises, and therefore, there is no reason to extend the clock in order to visit more units. The United Kingdom questioned the measures practical application as the timeline ultimately be governed by the term "work day." The Chair noted comments for and against and will leave the paper on the agenda for the next meeting of experts.

¶6. (SBU) Briefing by Military Commanders. This paper was agreed with minimal discussion.

¶7. (C) Evaluation Quota System. There seemed to be moderate opposition to this paper. Belgium questioned whether Russia

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would benefit more from the measure than NATO, offering an example that under the proposal Luxembourg would have to accept two evaluation visits while Russia would only have to accept six. The UK questioned whether a debate over numbers was appropriate as the measure is voluntary. The U.S. (Meyer) questioned how this paper would be presented. He offered that this topic illustrates why Allies should carefully consider how they frame topics at the AIAM so as not to stumble into debate in terms of NATO vs. Russia. As one of the drafters, Norway said that it could not speak to tactics at this time, but opined that in any case the formula in Vienna Document 99 (VD99) is outdated. The Chair reaffirmed that nations do not want to open VD99, so the discussions at the AIAM would likely result in no more than a Chairman's Statement. The paper will remain on the agenda for discussion at the next experts meeting.

8 (C) Size of Inspection Team. After some discussion over U.S. comments that the paper would be stronger if it addressed auxiliary personnel and interpreters, the Chair said it would issue a revision expanding point 3.2 to include interpreters, drivers and other auxiliary personnel. As there is already a FSC Chairman's Statement on interpreters, the Chair will also include a reference to that FSC document.

¶9. (C) Use of Digital Cameras. The U.S. noted concerns over the phrasing of the paragraph 3.A. and 3.B., questioning the use of the term "Chairman's Decision," and noting that this formulation seemed to predetermine the outcome of future discussions. The Chair agreed to take these comments into consideration in the next revision.

¶10. (C) Sensitive Points and Third Party. After lengthy discussion, nations agreed to drop discussion of Sensitive Points and Third Party. However, at the insistence of Canada, the Chair will offer a new paper for discussion on definition of Defense Installations.

¶11. (C) Concrete Parameters. The U.S. (Meyer) stated its willingness to discuss Allied views on this topic, but also noted that the U.S. has been skeptical of the need to define a Specified Area and is waiting for someone to present a compelling argument. There was increased opposition to the

draft paper, and even Hungary, a drafter, noted its opposition. Norway, however, argued that since Russia had tabled a proposal in Vienna, experts should discuss the topic at the VCC, adding that all proposals to improve implementation that are raised in Vienna should be discussed by the committee. The Chair agreed to drop the staff paper on Concrete Parameters, but said it would add discussion of Russia's FSC proposal to the agenda. (Comment. On the margins, USDel asked in den Bosch what his intent was with regard to the Russia paper. He said that the paper could be discussed in the experts meeting with the intent of forwarding any resulting position to Vienna for use in the AIAM should discussion arise on the Russian proposal. End comment)

12 (C) Preparation of Remaining Issues. There were no additional volunteers to draft remaining papers, so the Chair noted that the remaining topics in Ref A would be dropped from consideration for AIAM preparation.

VCC-VDOC

¶13. (S) Norway announced that it had completed an assessment regarding its upcoming inspection quota to Turkmenistan and has decided that, since no military activity is expected, Norway will return this quota to the committee so other nations can use it as appropriate. Germany quickly notified the committee that it wanted this quota. There were no other bidders.

¶14. (S) Norway also presented a briefing on its upcoming inspection to Russia. Noting that in August the Russian Federation notified that a major military training exercise was scheduled in late September for the 2nd Army in Samara. The area of military activity notified by Russia was composed of a 500 square kilometer box over the Totskoya training area. Norway reported that it intended to notify a specified

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area large enough to capture other units in the area-from approximately 20,000 to 25,000 square kilometers.

¶15. (S) Following the brief, the U.S. asked whether Norway expected Russia to accept the dimensions of Norway's proposed specified area, noting that recent discussions in Vienna indicated that Russia retained its maximum limit of 18,000 square kilometers. Norway responded that it understood that Russia had already decided to increase its maximum limit to 25,000 square kilometers, but that in any case, this inspection would provide a good opportunity to test Russia's intentions. (Comment: Russia has limited the size of specified areas to 18,000 kilometers as mater of national policy. Russia tabled a proposal in the Forum for Security Cooperation (FSC) in Vienna several years ago in an attempt to codify that limit. In 2008, Russia revised that proposal to set the maximum at 25,000 square kilometers. The most recent Russian proposal does not have wide support in Vienna. During a July 2008 informal meeting in Vienna the Russian delegation indicated that the Ministry of Defense would continue to limit the size of a specified area to 18,000 square kilometers until such time as Russia revised its national policy, presumably in response to an FSC decision. End note.)

VCC-Open Skies

¶16. (C) Spain reported that its joint mission with Canada over Russia had been turned down by Russia over discrepancies in sensor documentation. In addition, Spain noted Russia's rejection of their mission plan on the grounds that the flight path included segments over the Northern Caucasus. Spain and Canada read official statements on their

governments' reaction to Russia's refusal. Both statements will be attached to the meeting VCC report.

¶17. (C) In response to the Chair's request that nations keep him informed of such issues, and to Canada's statement that referenced the upcoming Russia flight that will transit Canada, the U.S. (Meyer) commented that at present the U.S. intended to fulfill all its treaty obligations regarding the Russian flight. The U.S. also reported that Russia had recently found similar technical discrepancies in U.S. sensor documentation as they had with the Spanish aircraft.

VD99 Mechanisms

¶18. (S) The Chair noted that at the recent HLTF several Allies had been disappointed that arms control had not played a more constructive role in the recent crisis in Georgia. Acknowledging that the speed with which events unfolded may have precluded meaningful intervention, the Chair requested nations to consider discussion at the next VCC on what role VD99 might have played in the crisis, or role it could play in a future similar scenario. In response, Denmark said it would be helpful to have a report on what actions were taken by the OSCE. The Chair agreed and said it would compile a report from OSCE documentation.

VCC-CFE

¶19. (C) Spain reported on Russia's refusal of a CFE inspection. Slovenia also reported on Russia's refusal of a Slovenian notification. Slovenia also commented that it had not received support from Allied interventions at the September 8 JCG. Slovenia reiterated the need for Allies to support each other during these interventions.

¶20. (C) The Chair provided a very general read out from the HLTF and noted that the IS was prepared to offer assistance to the JCG-T in Vienna at the request of the HLTF. The Chair said it was also suggested that the IS revisit the paper published last year on the implications of Russian Suspension.

21 (C) The Chair reported that Georgia had informally

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notified it that Georgia would not be in a position to meet the deadline for this year's data exchange. Georgia said that it had lost a number of pieces of TLE, that the status of this equipment was not resolved, and that a number of facilities and military sites had either been mined or contained unexploded ordinance. Georgia had reported that it was ready to accept CFE inspections, but was requesting that inspections be conducted under Section VIII.

¶22. (S) The following changes to the CFE inspection schedule were reported:

-- Canada's inspection of Georgia scheduled for Time Block (TB) 27 is postponed to TB 36.

-- Canada's inspection of Ukraine scheduled for TB 34 has been postponed, with new dates to be determined.

-- Canada's inspection of Russia scheduled for TB 35 is postponed to TB 41.

-- Germany's inspection of Ukraine scheduled for TB 38 is postponed to TB 49.

-- Germany will inspect Moldova (Bilateral, beyond Quota) in TB 38.

-- Hungary's inspection of Ukraine scheduled for TB 32 is rescheduled for TB 35. (Note. This is the third CFE inspection team (with the U.S. and UK) scheduled for Ukraine in this TB. Although this is a bilateral inspection, Chair asked Hungary to verify their intent.)

-- Greece's inspection of Georgia scheduled for TB 30 is postponed to TB 33.

-- Denmark's inspection of Russia is postponed from TB 31 with dates to be determined.

VCC-Other Business

¶23. (C) Per Ref B, the U.S. asked the Chair for an analysis of Russia's activity on VERITY. The IS (Paksov) reported that while VERITY does not provide a capability to monitor individual users access to specific files, it does allow the IS to determine whether Russia had logged on to the system, and Russia has not accessed VERITY since it suspended implementation in December.

Next VCC

¶24. (C) Greece and Norway indicated that they had a conflict with the VCC meeting proposed for October 28. The Chair said other options had been considered, but based on the availability of meeting space the 28th was the only day presently available. The Chair noted, however, that if the HLTF offsite occurs in the middle of October, the HLTF proposed for October 23 could get canceled, opening up space on the 23rd.

Proposed dates for the remainder of 2008 are:

-- October 28 -- VCC and experts
-- November 17 -- Experts
-- December 18 -- VCC and Experts

¶25. (C) Proposed dates for the first quarter of 2009 are:

-- January 8 -- Experts
-- February 5 -- VCC and Experts
-- March 6 -- VCC and Experts

(Note. The AIAM is currently proposed for 2-4 March, which may impact the schedule of the VCC and a proposed VCC seminar on 11-13 March. End note.)

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